



SOCIAL ACTION

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EDITORIAL

IS THE CHURCH "POPULATIONIST"?

Is the Catholic Church "populationist or anti-populationist"? This is the theme of the Lenten pastoral letter of the Cardinal Archbishop of Bombay to the subjects of his arch-diocese. Although the pastoral is addressed directly to the Catholics of the Bombay arch-diocese, it is meant to be read by a much wider public; indeed, by the official policy makers in the country, by the ardent advocates of family planning, and by both Christians and non-Christians at large, who are all interested in this vital problem that is dominating the field of social and economic activity at the present time. There is some ground for the complaint in Catholic circles that the Catholic viewpoint on the complex question of family planning is either misunderstood and therefore regarded with hos-

tility, or else contemptuously discarded as old-fashioned and irrelevant. Indian Catholics are even accused of running away from the problem and the parents of large families are blamed for working against the interests of the nation. Especially in the services, it is not uncommon for fathers of large families to be reprimanded by their superior officers for a lack of responsibility in this matter. In these circumstances, the position of the Catholic Church on family planning needs to be clearly set forth and the pastoral letter of the Archbishop of Bombay has this particular purpose in view. So far there has been the general tendency among Catholics to avoid discussing the topic, but nothing can be lost by a candid exposition of the truth; much more so when it is eminently reasonable and touches

an intimate matter like the propagation of life.

Ends and Means

In the national propaganda for the practice of family planning by the use of contraceptives and sterilisation, there seems to be a complete forgetfulness of the moral implications of the marriage act. The primary purpose of marriage is the procreation of children and the structural nature of the family in which the child is born clearly reveals how both marriage and the family are intrinsically related to securing this purpose, — the bearing and the education of children. The immorality of the use of contraceptives and sterilisation arises from the deliberate prevention by artificial methods of the natural function of the sexual act to achieve its goal. To frustrate that end wilfully and of set purpose becomes grievously sinful, in as much as it violates the precise intention of the Creator. Nor can any talk or fear of a population explosion justify such immoral behaviour. In other words, the end cannot justify the means. It is because of this fundamental moral principle that the Catholic Church absolutely forbids the use of

all artificial methods of birth-control. Even supposing that the argument of a scarcity of food resources and too many mouths to feed be true, it would still be a negation of the fundamental principle that the end does not justify the means if contraceptives or sterilisation were used to reduce or stabilise the population.

Therefore Populationist

The rigid adherence to such a fundamental moral principle does not imply as a consequence that the Church is wedded to a programme of encouraging the population to grow as much as possible. It is obvious that in the prevailing circumstances in India, where prices are rising, unemployment is rife, and where it becomes a great strain on the slender financial resources of a large number of families to support and educate many children over a period of years so as to provide them with the opportunities for self-development required by the high standards of the modern state, the number and spacing of children both in the interests of the family and of the nation at large becomes an urgent necessity. The Church is quite aware of

this agonizing problem, to use the words of Pius XII. But there are ways of resolving the issue other than artificial and immoral methods involved in the use of contraceptives and sterilisation.

Periodic Continence

The most natural method and one that comes to mind immediately is that of sexual abstinence or complete continence. But since the goals of marriage also include the fostering of mutual love and the satisfaction of the reproductive instinct, expressed through the act of intercourse, the Church permits and advises the use of periodic continence or the so-called 'safe period', especially where there are grave social, economic, and health reasons of the mother and the future offspring to be considered. In this case nature herself seems to provide a safe outlet for the powerful instinctive sexual urges that are tied up with the propagation of the human race. Periodic continence implies a certain amount of self-control, which in itself is a good and desirable thing for the formation of character. It is consistent with the laws of God because it does not defraud the intention of

nature and is founded on right intentions and moral motives. At the same time in so far as it implies self-control, periodic continence prevents the debasing of marriage into an opportunity for unlimited self-indulgence, especially in the case of the male partner. Indeed the abuses to which women are subjected in the bearing of children has been one of the reasons for the strong advocacy of contraceptives and sterilisation by the Indian Women's Council.

Too difficult

Nor is it true to say that periodic continence imposes on the human couple a burden heavier than they can bear. The answer of a Catholic doctor to this difficulty was that if diabetics who are advised not to take sugar in their food for the sake of their health are so careful to observe the doctor's order, why can't married people who for good reasons cannot afford to have a larger family not practise periodic restraint? Indeed as the Archbishop writes in his pastoral letter, "the very mentality engendered by "family planning" (by the use of contraceptives and sterilisation) is one of

self-seeking, comfort and an overwhelming desire for security. These measures promote self-indulgence as against self-control, selfishness as against unselfishness." He then quotes very appropriately from the writings of Gandhiji the following lines which were penned as early as 1936: "The greatest harm done by the propaganda (in favour of birth control) lies in its rejection of the old ideal and the substitution in its place of one which, if carried out, must spell moral and physical extinction of the race... It was reserved for our generation to glorify vice by calling it virtue. The greatest disservice the protagonists of contraceptives are doing to the youth of India is to fill their minds with what appears to me wrong ideology. Let young men and women who hold her destiny in their hands beware of this false god and guard the treasure with which God has blessed them, and use it, if they wish, for the only purpose for which it was intended."

Norms

The right perspective in which family planning wherever it is needed should be

viewed is essentially as a process of education through which parents are made to realise their obligations in regard to the number of children they should have in the prevailing circumstances. It is for them to decide how many children the family should have. In taking this responsibility parents must have regard not only for each other's physical and psychological well-being, but also for the welfare of their children, the welfare of their family, and those of others and the welfare of the entire community of men. The function of the State, as the guardian of the common good, is to watch the population movement in the country and to equip itself for this purpose with the necessary means of study and analysis, warning its citizens of the unbalanced development of population when this occurs. Its intervention should be limited to collective and indirect measures, for society does not control the family, at least in what touches directly the essential purpose of marriage, — the having and upbringing of children. In these matters the family is only responsible to itself and to God, and must develop in itself a sense of

these basic obligations.

Hence parents may consciously decide to plan their family by the method of period continence which is consistent with the laws of God. There must always be substantial reasons for such behaviour. Even when regulation is rightly used to space out births, its basic rule must always remain the desire to create, which is characteristic of love.

Briefly, in the under-developed countries the problem is not to choose between a policy of reducing births and one of increasing material and human resources, but rather one of education; to teach each member of the community to see more and more clearly his responsibilities to the rest.

National Front

Unfortunately in our country, family planning has taken the form of an unrestricted propaganda drive for the use of artificial contraceptives, of sterilisation of women after delivery, and of cash payments to men if they voluntarily offer themselves for sterilisation. Very little effort is made to educate the parents of families to take

their responsibilities seriously. It is taken for granted too easily that the method of periodic continence is a failure and that the self-control required for its practice too difficult. It is a strange phenomenon moreover to find people who are otherwise very orthodox where religious observance is concerned openly advocating contraceptives and sterilisation without paying the least attention to the moral aspects of these methods of controlling the population. Sometimes one almost receives the impression at every public conference that family planning is the fundamental and unique solution to each and every problem that afflicts this ancient land of ours. That the food problem needs to be seriously tackled is obvious. Fertilisers, better seeds, better implements, and a variety of co-operative societies and services to cover the needs of the farming population are often referred to but somehow only half-heartedly undertaken. While the vast amount of harm suffered by the crops due to insects and pests of various kinds is deplored, little is done to control the havoc. Further, girls in village India still marry quite young and with-

out much preparation for shouldering the responsibilities of married life. Why is no attention paid to these technical and social problems? And why should our people be led astray by false propaganda into adopting lax and immoral attitudes to fundamental functions in married life that give the marriage contract its sacred meaning and its partners true happiness? These are some peculiar social aspects of the Indian situation which need to be tackled before blindly plumping for birth control. Finally, mention must be made of the food habits of the people. A varied diet would be much more easier to provide than just one commodity. It would also be more healthy and strengthening.

The International Level

The problem of over-population has international ramifications. The point is that while 16 per cent of the world's population are able to enjoy 70 per cent of the food produced, the rest have to go undernourished. There seems to be something radically wrong with our methods of distribution. On the other hand, the world's food production has increased at a

faster rate than the total population. According to FAO's report in the year 1955, the world population had increased by 13 per cent between 1946-1954, but food production had increased by 26 per cent during the same period. Here was the reason that despite the advocacy of birth control by Dr. Toynbee in a lecture delivered under the auspices of FAO in Rome last year, the authorities of FAO declared that they were more interested in gathering surplus capital and food production for stimulating agriculture in the under-developed countries and providing their people with more nourishment. This was possible without recourse to any birth-control programme, and it was their specific assignment from the United Nations to provide food for the nations that were hungry.

Obviously, the problem of population is complex and involved. It is not a simple question of using contraceptives and sterilisation, while neglecting or despising the moral overtones that are intrinsically combined with every voluntary and deliberate human action. The attitude of the Church is

therefore not primitive or backward in the sense that She clings to a code of morality that is too ancient for observance in our days with the great advances made in science and social living. As long as men remain men, Her prescriptions continue to be valid in spite of the changes in social circumstances that may take place. All these changes do not affect the essential being of man, — an individual endowed with freedom and reason who must choose what is right and reject what is wrong. It is on this moral plane that the population problem must also

be tackled. It is not enough to view the matter purely on the economic or social level. That is why the method of periodic continence is permitted because all these aspects are given due consideration. Thus it is evident that a broader and a more profound attitude towards family planning is urgently needed in our country and the Church's prescription is not so outdated or unrealistic as one might be led to imagine from all the propaganda that goes on in favour of birth-control by illicit means.

The Editor

RACISM, LAW AND POLITICS

William J. Kenealy, S.J.*

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

These familiar words of the Declaration of Independenec, written in 1776, are not part of the organic law of the land. They express, however, the vitalizing spirit and thought which generated the body and letter of the Constitution of 1789 and the Bill of Rights of 1791. They epitomize the living philosophy of our law and of our democratic government. They inspired the text and vitalized the purpose of the Preamble to our Federal Constitution:

"We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more

perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

According to this philosophy, government is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. And the end of government is not merely the establishment of order, for order itself is but a means, and its end is justice. But in a mature society, justice too is but a means, and its end is liberty. Finally, liberty is simply that condition of social life which is necessary to enable all members of society to co-operate in peace and prosperity, to achieve their perfection, to attain their happiness, and thereby to fulfill, in human dignity, their divine

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destiny. Thus, the real end of government and of law is adequately defined as a just and ordered liberty. But the essence of a just and ordered liberty is the free exercise by every human being of the rights which are proper to human personality and destiny. Therefore, the critical test of the value of a government is its practical efficiency in protecting the equal personal rights of all of its people.

Now the characteristic feature of a democracy, as distinguished from other forms of government, is that it is ruled by the majority. But contrary to a popular modern fallacy, true democracy is not a matter of mere form. True democracy is much more than majority rule. Majority rule can be, as on occasion it has been, mob rule. Remember an excited Italian people, flooding the piazzas of Rome, crying "Duce! Duce! Duce!"; they cried for a leader and chose a demagogue. Remember a bewildered German people, crowding the squares of Berlin, shouting "Heil Hitler!", and voting for Adolph Shicklegruber; they shouted for a fuehrer and ac-

cepted a racist tyrant. Who ever received greater majorities than Joseph Stalin? Can we easily forget that, less than a century ago, despite the idealism of the Declaration of Independence, right here in the land of the free and the home of the brave, majority rule maintained the savage abomination of human slavery? No, there is no magic in mere forms. Mere majority rule is capable of a tyranny as atrocious as that of any absolute despotism. Therefore, democracy, as *mere* majority rule, would be a faceless and gutless philosophy of law and of government.

On the contrary, since the essence of liberty is the freedom to exercise fundamentally equal personal rights, and since voting majorities are able and quick to vindicate their own rights, true and effective democracy must consist in minority rights under majority rule. But never in history has there been, and never in the future can there be, minority rights under majority rule, unless the majority repudiates the nonsense that numbers make truth, and that might makes right; unless the majority has

the intelligence and good will to subordinate desire to reason, and to subjugate prejudice to judgment; unless, in other words, the majority faces and accepts the fact that there is an *objective moral order*, within the range of human understanding and within the capacity of human virtue, separating the right from the wrong, distinguishing the good from the evil — an objective moral order to which all civil societies and all voting majorities are bound in conscience to conform, and upon which the liberty, the peace, and the happiness of personal, national, and international life depend.

Natural Law

The mandatory aspect of this objective moral order is called the *natural law*. In virtue of the natural law, essentially equal human beings are endowed by their Creator with essentially equal natural rights and obligations, which are inalienable precisely because they are God-given. They are antecedent, therefore, both in logic and in nature, to the formation of civil societies and the casting of majority ballots. They are not bestowed by the beneficence of any government,

democratic or otherwise; wherefore they cannot be destroyed by the tyranny of any government, democratic or otherwise. The freedom fighters of Hungary understand this. Rather it is the sacred moral obligation of all governments and of all voting majorities to acknowledge their existence, protect their exercise, and facilitate their enjoyment, by the enactment of civil laws and the adoption of social practices which accept, formulate and apply the principles of the natural law to the complex conditions of a changing and dynamic civil society.

Granted the existence of Almighty God, who is appealed to four times in the text of the Declaration of Independence, the natural law is a simple thing. It is our personal and national participation in the Eternal Law of God. It implies that we know, independently of city hall, or the state capital, or Washington, or London, or Moscow — or of the Vatican, for that matter — that all of us, without exception, regardless of race or colour, are equally the creatures of God, endowed with immortal souls, destined for eternal happiness,

bound in conscience to pursue that destiny, and possessed of equal and inalienable rights to enable us to do so. It implies that we know, from our created human nature, that some things help in attaining that destiny, and some make it more difficult; that some actions and some institutions are objectively good, and some are bad, regardless of temporary consequences or majority votes. It implies that human governments and civil laws are instituted and enacted by us for the sacred purpose of protecting the equal and personal rights of every single member of the brotherhood of men, so that all of us may attain, in human dignity, the divine destiny decreed by the One God who is the Father of us all.

Thus the philosophy of the natural law provides the rational and spiritual basis for civil rights and liberties. It shows the genuine foundation for the unity of the human race. It manifests the real reason for the equality of all men. It offers the true measure for the majestic dignity of human personality. It tells us *why* the Chinese coolie is the equal of the Roman cardinal; *why* the

Australian tribesman is the equal of the European diplomat; *why* the African bushman is the equal of the American tycoon, or the Senator from Mississippi, or the Governor of Arkansas: because all of them, and all of us, white and black and red and yellow and brown, are created by the One Good God for unsegregated happiness with Him for all eternity. For such is the mutual destiny which cements the unity of the human race; such is the common destiny which glorifies the equality of all men; such is the majestic destiny which measures the dignity of man — and makes rather fatuous the pride and prejudice of our accidental differences, be they physical, intellectual, economic, social or racial. This is what gives *intelligibility* to our constitutional principles of freedom and equality. This is what demands, not merely decent human freedom and treatment, but reverential respect and fraternal love for every single person on the face of God's good earth, regardless of race or creed or colour or national origin.

This is the philosophy of the natural law. It is not

wishful theory. It is not pietistic pap. It is not sanctimonious sentimentality. It is the only solid soil of human freedom and equality. It is the philosophy upon which this nation was founded and to which this nation, by its most solemn covenants and usages, is dedicated. It is the philosophy upon which we, the people of the United States, did declare our independence and establish our Federal Constitution. Despite the cynics in some academic halls, and the secularists on some public platforms, the glory of the American Constitution is that, for the first time in history, a great and powerful people, in a solemn profession of *politico-religious* faith, made human freedom and equality the cornerstones of its political structure.

Government

But ideals are not enough. They must be put to work. General principles alone do not solve all particular problems. Neither a philosophy nor a constitution is self-executing. A constitution requires legislative implementation, judicial interpretation, and executive enforcement. Moreover, it may need substantial amendment from time

to time, as the conditions and circumstances of life change, and as experience and maturity disclose error and discover truth. The original Constitution of 1789 was a magnificent and dynamic document. But it was by no means perfect. It was not written in heaven. Since the Bill of Rights was added to it in 1791, it has been amended twelve times from 1798 to 1951. As a matter of embarrassing fact, despite the "all men are created equal" profession of the Declaration of Independence, some of the Founding Fathers were slave-owners; as a matter of tragic fact, the original Constitution of 1789 protected the slave-trade until 1808, and provided for slavery itself without limitation of time. How could this be? The Founding Fathers were not gross hypocrites. Profoundly influenced by the traditions and customs of their own times, as indeed all of us are, partially blinded by the persuasiveness of money, a trait not uncommon today, they simply failed to appreciate to the full the tremendous breadth and the majestic height of the philosophy they enunciated in the Declaration. As Chief Justice Taney said, in the tragic case of *Dred Scott v Sanford* :

"It is difficult at this day (1857) to realize the state of public opinion in relation to that unfortunate (Negro) race, which prevailed in the civilized and enlightened portions of the world at the time of the Declaration of Independence, and when the Constitution of the United States was adopted... They (the Negroes) had for more than a century been regarded as beings of an inferior order; and altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations; and so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit."

We heard a lot from Los Angeles and Chicago(*) recently about returning to the Founding Fathers. But it is given to man to grow, and not merely in age and size, but in wisdom and in grace as well. Wherefore, in the growth and perfection of our American democracy, it is imperative that we proceed, *not back* to the Founding Fathers, but *forward* from them. Thank

God, we have done so to a considerable extent. We have not been entirely shackled by a blind and unreasoning adherence to all the injustices of the past. We have caught a glimpse, at least, of a better future.

After the tragic *Dred Scott Decision* of 1857, which helped to plunge a divided nation into a fratricidal Civil War, President Lincoln's (probably illegal) Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865, the Fourteenth in 1868, and the Fifteenth in 1870, destroyed forever the barbarism of human slavery in the United States and carried the nation forward in giant strides from the complacency of the Founding Fathers in the direction of genuine liberty and equality for all men created equal. We did advance in wisdom. We did grow in grace. But the ultimate goal still eluded us. Another tragic decision blocked our progress in 1896 in the case of *Plessy v Ferguson*.

White and Coloured People

In *Plessy v Ferguson* the Supreme Court of the United

(*) At the conventions of the Democratic and Republican political parties.

States decided that the "equal protection of the laws" clause of the Fourteenth Amendment was satisfied by a Louisiana statute which required railroads in that State to provide "equal but separate" accommodations for the white and coloured races; and, consequently, that compulsory racial segregation was constitutional. The decision was not unanimous. Justice John Marshall Harlan, the grandfather of the present Justice Harlan, wrote a powerful and prophetic dissent. Arguing that "there is no caste here," and that "our Constitution is colour-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens," Justice Harlan predicted that the Court's decision would "stimulate aggressions more or less brutal and irritating" upon the rights of Negroes, and would nullify the full purpose of the great Civil War Amendments. Time has vindicated his argument. History has verified his prophecy.

For the sanctioning of compulsory racial segregation on the railroads of Louisiana by *Plessy v Ferguson* was immediately seized upon as a legal benediction for racism generally. The decision un-

leashed a horde of segregation statutes in a dozen states, covering not merely public transportation, but schools and hospitals, parks and playgrounds, zoos and golf courses, beaches and swimming pools, and almost all public necessities and conveniences. Two dozen states have segregated even the sacred contract of marriage. In Louisiana, for instance, a man and woman, husband and wife in the eyes of God, and living together with His blessing, may be sentenced to five years at hard labour, presumably in separate but equal prisons. Soviet Russia does not go that far.

It is a mistake to think, as many do, that compulsory racial segregation goes back to the beginning of slavery, or even to the ending of slavery at the time of the Civil War. It does not. It is a twentieth century evil. There were very few segregation statutes before 1896, when *Plessy v Ferguson* gave the green light to racism. Before 1900, only Georgia segregated street cars; North Carolina and Virginia followed in 1901; Arkansas, Tennessee and South Carolina in 1903; Maryland and Missis-

issippi in 1904; Florida in 1905; and Oklahoma in 1907. Public schools were segregated for the first time by the constitution of Louisiana in 1898; of Virginia in 1902. Parks and playgrounds for the first time in Georgia in 1905; in Louisiana in 1914. And so on.

Disenfranchisement of the Negro

Fulfilling Justice Harlan's prophecy of stimulating "aggressions more or less brutal and irritating" upon the rights of Negroes, another new legal and political phenomenon developed at the same time. In order to enact these segregation statutes and to secure them against repeal, it was decided by white majorities to disenfranchise the Negro and to strip him of his peaceful power of political self-defense. During this period, various devices known as "grandfather," "good character," and "understanding" clauses were written into the registration statutes of many states. Such statutes were enacted for the first time in South Carolina in 1895, Louisiana in 1898, North Carolina in 1900, Alabama in 1901, Virginia in 1902, Georgia in 1908, Oklahoma in 1910.

The results of such schemes against the political rights of Negroes were disastrous. For instance, in Louisiana in 1896, the year of *Plessy v Ferguson*, there were 130,334 Negroes registered to vote; eight years later, in 1904, ninety-nine percent of them had been stricken from the polls, and the number had been cut down to 1,342; and as late as 1940 it was an insignificant 803. Thereafter, owing to a series of Supreme Court decisions penetrating the fraud of these statutes, and culminating in the case of *Smith v Allwright* in 1944, the number of Negroes registered to vote in Louisiana rose to 22,576 in 1948, to 97,101 in 1952, and to 161,410 in 1956. But even this is a small percentage of the estimated 529,000 Negroes qualified to register in that State, who are afraid to register, or who are frustrated by official evasion and unofficial harassment. And the same is true in many other states. The hearings and reports of President Truman's Committee on Civil Rights in 1947, and of President Eisenhower's Commission on Civil Rights in 1959, are replete with unsailable evidence of the determined and vigorous battle of Racists to disenfranchise the

Negro and to fasten upon him the badge of second-class American citizenship. This, it seems to me, is the greatest domestic issue of our time.

Incompatible with Natural Law

Now, the fundamental principles of the natural law, which I indicated in the beginning of these remarks, are obviously incompatible with racial segregation and discrimination *unless*: the Negro is not a man; or, if he is a man, then an essentially inferior man; or, if not an essentially inferior man, then an accidentally inferior man whose accidental inferiorities unfit him, *as a Negro*, for free association with the allegedly superior white man. At this point I am constrained to beg the considerate indulgence of the Negroes present for the mention of these hypotheses, every one of which is demonstrably false. Nevertheless, these *are* the hypotheses which lie at the heart of the segregation issue. I can only plead that neither the hypotheses nor the issue are of my making.

Human knowledge, it seems to me, has progressed to the

point where the burden of proving the alleged inferiorities of the Negro is upon him who asserts them. That burden has not been sustained. Nor has it been seriously shouldered. That the Negro is a man, essentially equal to the white man, is a clear and certain truth, objectively demonstrated by philosophy, experimentally verified by science, and unanimously accepted by the common consent of every mature and civilized society. And that the Negro is not an accidentally inferior man, whose accidental inferiorities unfit him, *as a Negro*, for free association with the allegedly superior white man, is also an objective certainty — established by philosophical considerations of his origin, nature and destiny; corroborated by the overwhelming testimony of the anthropological, biological, psychological and sociological sciences; and conceded by the vast majority, at least, of thoughtful men the world over. The racist hypotheses have no standing in the world of learning.

(*To be continued*)

SOCIO-ECONOMIC UPLIFT THROUGH CO-OPERATIVES AND COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

M. Van den Bogaert

To a parish priest who has the uplift of his people at heart, the starting of a co-operative society or the launching of a cottage industry is often suggested as one of the best means of putting the people on the road to progress. How exactly should he proceed, to what should he pay

attention? The present article aims at throwing some light on these and other questions. The ideas are based on the important book, already referred to in two previous articles *The Missionary's Role in Socio-Economic Betterment*.

I. CO-OPERATIVES TO BUILD CHARACTER AND THE ECONOMY

One of the headaches which every Parish priest has to confront is to try to keep the small farmers or city householders out of the claws of the moneylender. The problem of credit in India is simply staggering. According to the All-India Credit Survey in 1950, 93% of the total rural borrowings amongst India's peasants came from private moneylenders. This percentage has decreased

somewhat in the last years, as a result of the efforts of the government to spread the co-operative movement, but it still remains very high. On the other hand it is an inescapable fact that poor people are at times obliged to borrow money, in order to make improvements, to increase their production, or to tide over a crisis.

It is therefore obvious that this is a problem that will

normally worry any priest who cares about his flock. The words of Mgr. M. M. Coady, late director of the Extension Department of the St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Canada, are full of burning meaning for the situation in India. "In our day, the economic question has a particular religious significance. As a matter of fact, it is the great modern religious question, for if it is not solved, freedom, culture and religion may easily be seriously endangered.... It is basic to the life of man. Economic action is intimately linked up with spiritual activities. It influences all man's actions, and when his economic life is deficient there is grave danger of his spiritual life being likewise deficient. Poverty is not always holy. It may frequently be a proximate occasion of sin."

1. Basic Principles and different kinds of Co-operatives

Co-operatives fall into five general classes :

(1) *Credit Unions* : Systematic weekly or monthly deposits by enrolled members build up a fund from which members may make borrowings according to accepted

rules, to meet their family or business needs.

(2) *Proceeding and Marketing Co-operatives*: Farmers and artisans through co-operatives can secure a greater share of the consumer's money by eliminating the middle man, and thus improve their living condition.

(3) *Service Co-operatives* : Housing projects, health services or other kinds of necessities have been successfully organised along co-operative lines.

(4) *Consumers' Co-operatives* : Co-operative stores handling merchandise are another form of this group activity. In some parts of the world these co-operatives, starting from modest efforts, have built up considerable networks with wholesale centres, etc. The Co-operative movement in England is an example at hand.

(5) *Multi-purpose Co-operatives* : They represent several types of activity. Farmers may possess a credit union as well as a marketing co-operative and a co-operative store. The Indian Government encourages the

creation of this kind of co-operatives in the villages.

The modern co-operatives had their origin among a group of weavers in Rochdale, England, in the 1840's. The operating principles these weavers evolved were very sound and are still considered today as the basic principles of a co-operative: (1) A modest annual interest to members on their investment share; (2) A sum set aside annually to continue unceasingly the educational of the members; (3) Distribution of the net profits in proportion to each member's purchases; (4) Trading for cash and at current rates; (5) An open membership list known to all other members; (6) Each man one vote, regardless of his investment share.

2. Seven Steps to successful Organisation

How should the priest who wants to encourage his people to start a co-operative proceed?

(1) *Acquire a sound philosophy.* He must resort to literature and get the basic ideas and techniques clear for himself before he launches

the project. He must be convinced that he is doing much more than merely to organise a casual savings club. He must be convinced that he is developing man as an individual and men as groups to realise their possibilities for good, that he is teaching them a deep sense of responsibility toward others, that he must cultivate in them self-denial and self-sacrifice essential for the common good, that he is educating people to have motives of justice and charity towards one another, and that thus he builds a community based on the virtues of justice and charity.

(2) *Start with a Credit Union.* The credit union comes first because it is easiest to operate and because the people suffer greatly from the money-lender. This should only be the start.

(3) *Prepare a group of leaders.* About a dozen of well-trained laymen are needed as treasurer, board of directors, credit committee, supervisory committee. All the discussion group techniques and the matter to be treated in this training of leaders is available in books and pamphlets; they should

not be improvised. Village people tend to be suspicious and pessimistic. It is therefore absolutely necessary to create confidence by having it known that you have a well-trained group of men who will defend the aims and objectives of the movement.

(4) *Educate the Community.* Depending on circumstances, leaflets, pamphlets, papers, films, slides, the radio should be used. Variety is very important, especially with illiterate people. Meetings should include leadership courses, children's programmes, study groups for women, week-end institutes, and conferences. However the best of all is the discussion group technique.

(5) *Enlist the membership.* There must be a potential credit union membership of at least 100 people. If the credit union remains too small, it will not give the service that is intended to give, since the saving capacity of only a few people is too limited.

(6) *Create a community bond through membership.* A Co-operative should not create division in the community. Ordinarily it becomes a good

means of contact with various people in the community. When the parish is the only common bond, let the co-operative be a parish organisation. But as a rule wherever possible it should be open for non-catholics also, provided they are honest, and ready to abide by the rules.

(7) *Keep the rules: don't go too fast.* The over-all techniques and procedure in bringing adult education and ownership to people, are the same everywhere. The priest should proceed only as fast as he can educate his leaders and the people. But let him move with courage, conviction, hard work and trust in the grace of God.

From all that precedes it is clear that the co-operative movement places great stress on building in the people's minds clear principles and strong convictions.

The buying club can be used very effectively as a temporary measure at the start. It is merely a group of persons, who under guidance, contribute each a share for buying something jointly. The priest can give them a feeling of accomplishment if through

a buying club they purchase something they could not have without getting together. He should then proceed to help them to organise a real consumer co-operative.

3. *The Capacity to Inspire Village People*

A notable example of an ordinary priest who possessed that magic which inspires simple people to answer confidently his admonitions is embodied in the person of Father Harion Ganey, S.J., who has with unusual success organised the co-operative movement first in British Honduras, then in the Fiji Islands, and finally in Samoa.

In 1942 he was assigned to a Carib village of the inland inhabited by some 700 souls, where the social problem was simply appalling. In 1943 Fr. Ganey started his first credit union. Those who knew the people said that it was very rash to start such a thing among unbusinesslike people like the Caribs. However, the unions succeeded and the people witnessing its success went on to other simple forms of co-operation. From this humble starting point the whole movement spread throughout the Island. In

1953 Fr. Ganey was sent to the Fiji Islands to start the movement there. Once the movement was well established he was called to Western Samoa. At the end of 1957 there were 231 co-operatives in the Fiji Islands, most of them in villages, with 24,000 members, who had saved 425,600 dollars in those first three and a half years. The record in British Honduras is hardly less glorious. In 1958 there were 34 credit unions scattered all over the island. In 1956 not less than 7,522 belonged to credit unions. From the beginning of the movement these people had saved a total of 325,746 dollars. Which means that each member saved an average of 43 dollars a year. In 1957 the members borrowed 252,303 dollars and paid interest of 24,110 dollars on their loans.

Finally there is the little record from Samoa, where Father Ganey started his work only recently. In the first six months nine credit unions were founded with 986 members. These people had saved 5,642 dollars which, loaned out in short-term borrowings, has represented 90,000 dollars in 862 loans.

Fr. Ganey is convinced that Co-operatives are really the people's business. "To young priests who go into this work", he says, "I would say that they'll never do very much in this field until they realise that they are not doing the people the favour by going to them; it is the people who do us missionaries the favour by opening the door of their village to us. We are not the people's boss; we are their servant. We cannot make the credit union, the co-operative, the new social way of life work, we can only point the way. We can only reap the

harvest of consolation when they, God's people, succeed in bettering their lives."

Fr. Ganey has learned one big lesson: "During my ten years in British Honduras, experience taught me, if nothing else, the great fact that I should not try to dominate the movement. This applies as well to my years of action in the Fiji Islands. It is a difficult lesson to learn and I learned by many mistakes. We hurt the people and the movement if we figure too positively in the programme."

II. RURAL VITALITY THROUGH SMALL INDUSTRIES

1. *What are Small Industries?*

Rural families in India are too exclusively dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. The income they get from their farms is very low, many are unemployed or underemployed. Cottage industries are one of the means which can help to solve this problem and therefore deserves the serious attention of the rural parish priest who wants to help his people to improve themselves.

What exactly is meant when we speak of Small Industries? Three kinds of such industries can be distinguished:-

(1) *Cottage Industries*: Where production is carried on in the home on a handicraft basis, that is, without power-driven machinery, although various implements and hand-tools are used in production (handlooms, oil ghannies, potter's wheels), etc. Cottage Industries fall into

two main categories: (i) those engaged in the processing of locally grown agricultural products: rice hulling, oil pressing, sugar-cane crushing, etc. (ii) those engaged in handicraft manufacture: handloom weaving, spinning, basket making, gold and silver work.

(2) *Small Workshops*: Such shops engage in carpentry or blacksmith work, repair of machinery such as oil engines, electric motors, rice-hullers, sugar crushers. They may manufacture such small articles as utensils, fountain pens, small machinery parts. Equipment may consist of small power-driven machines such as lathes or drills. The personnel will consist of a few hired workers.

(3) *Small Factory Industry*: The work done, the production, the equipment and the personnel are on a larger scale than in the workshop but yet under minimum factory specifications, it employs for instance, 20 or less persons if it uses power-driven machinery or 50 or less when it does not.

What are the goals envisioned for community small

industries? The general purpose is two-fold: (1) Relief of the needy: they want to alleviate unemployment, particularly in rural areas, thus augmenting the slender income of poor families. (2) Strengthening the rural economy: they want to help mobilise and utilise whatever capital there is in rural areas, to maintain the traditional social structure, to prevent an over-rapid flow of population to urban areas and to contribute to production and income.

The priest interested in small industries should keep the saying of Pius XII in mind: "Small and medium holdings in agriculture, in the arts and trades, in commerce and industry should be guaranteed and promoted; co-operative unions should ensure for them the advantages of big business." (Address of September the 1st, 1944).

2. The Frame in which the Priest should work

Before thinking of starting a project, the missionary should get well acquainted with the Government plans regarding the industrialisation of the area where he is working, and of the ways in

which Government wants to implement this plan. The priest must be in tune with the aspirations, hopes and ambitions of the people of his area. He must also have an over-all picture of the economic development of the country, so that his actions may fit into the local context of those plans. For there is no doubt that this general economic programme will affect his area, often much sooner than he thinks. He doesn't want his actions to be haphazard or out of relation with events in the region. The type of industries he suggests to the people, should fit those trends. Again, the Government plans in his region will include important assistance to small industries and the provision for the training of artisans, for equipment of industries under hire-purchase and installment buying plans, etc. The best should be made of all these forms of help that are available.

What precisely should the role of the priest be? His task will primarily be one of *education*. Industries must answer a felt need of the people, for they must ultimately be run by them. It is the people who must sup-

ply the enterprise and the initiative. It will be for the priest to make the people aware of these needs and to kindle in them the desire to go ahead. They must be convinced of the need of this project to improve their social and economic status. Then the priest will also have to be the *mediator* between the people and the government officials and technicians. Contacts must be made with the persons in the area or in the capital, who can advise on the technical aspects involved in the launching of a small industry. One should indeed never forget, that small industries should be workable business propositions. An analysis of markets, of sources of raw material and of capital will be necessary. The priest will have to put his people in touch with the competent extension services. He must likewise search out the leaders, those with potential business aptitudes who can provide the managerial capacity and who will contribute enthusiasm to the project.

3. The Proper Selection of a Small Industry

It is clear that on the proper selection of the industry will depend its failure or suc-

cess, at least for a good deal. Too often priests think along lines of traditional industries for their people. But these industries have their limitations. The supplementary income they yield is very small, their life is precarious in an economy that is industrialising. If a spinning mill opens, we must say goodbye to the handlooms. A utensils factory ruins any cottage industries along this line. A priest might preferably look to other possibilities, which do not rule out the traditional forms, but represent an additional dividend for a community by harnessing the skills and the enterprise of certain of the harder and more intelligent elements. He might think of developing a few social-minded entrepreneurs, who could start small industrial workshops, which would eventually evolve into small factories creating permanent employment in the area and giving work to a hundred or so families. Many of the little factories in India have started as little shops for repairs and odd jobs, employing not more than 5 people. Some were blacksmiths or factory workers who set themselves up as artisans.

This policy requires careful appraisal of the possibilities. Are there any central factories looking for ancilliary producers? Has the government any plans to favour small factory development to meet local needs? etc.

The discovery and training of potential entrepreneurs should receive the attention of the priest. Sometimes traders will be ready to form a team with workmen to the advantage of both. Facilities not too far away may be available for the industrial training of capable young men. Scholarships for engineering courses may possibly be secured. Training as apprentices in nearby factories is a consideration. But these young men should be fired with the desire not only for personal gain of a selfish sort but for the service of their community. And since small industries *will* be started in his neighbourhood sooner or later, however backward it may seem, why should the priest not aid his young people to be in the vanguard, stirring them to interest in broad social motives as well as personal profit?

In this connection our Catholic schools have a very

important role to play. They should supply industrial training of some sort, but much more important still, they should give to the students the ideal of taking pride in their business career, whether it is farming or an

industrial occupation. They should make them see private enterprise or entrepreneurship as a profession, that will help a great deal towards the common good of the whole community.

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I, Rev. Fr. M. A. Thamburaj, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dated
1st March, 1961

Rev. Fr. M. A. Thamburaj,
Publisher.

THEORY TO PRACTICE

MULTI-PURPOSE CO-OPERATIVE AT KODAIKANAL

A. Manipadam, S. J.

In June, 1959 when I first met them, the 20 Harijan families who have now organised themselves into a co-operative had nothing particularly distinctive about them to single them out from the usual pattern of poor Harijan families anywhere else in India. I had to listen to the same complaint of insufficient incomes, soaring prices, the many mouths to be fed, debts that bound them hand and foot to the small shop-keepers about the place, poor health and a host of other difficulties. But on a closer scrutiny I found that there were also certain redeeming features about this particular group, which I realised could easily be turned to their own advantage.

First, these twenty families were working under the same employer and were engaged in either domestic or garden-work. Again they were paid regularly every Saturday evening. Their place of work

and the houses where they lived, though rented for the most part, were not far from the road and easily accessible by bus or lorry. Furthermore, they had all occupied pieces of Government land the previous year, and two or three had succeeded in raising some potatoes though without any notable profit.

My first problem was to choose the type of co-operative that would suit them. It would manifestly have to solve their long-range needs and at the same time, cater to their day-to-day recurring necessities. Further it would have to achieve a more difficult task. As the co-operative would begin from scratch, it would have to educate the members step by step in the principles and practice of the co-operative way in the very working of the co-operative.

Though probably the most difficult to run successfully, I soon realised that I was left

with no other choice but the Multi-purpose co-operative society. This is the way I introduced it to the workers: "You need money to cultivate your fields, don't you? You have to pay your debts in the shops. You wish to have good houses to live in. You have to think about the future of your children, about their education, their employment and their marriage. May I show you a simple way to solve all these knotty problems. And when they eagerly assented, I told them, "You are buying your weekly provisions every saturday from the shops. Why don't you all together as a group order the things you need from Madurai, share the provisions, and divide the savings by buying wholesale among yourselves?" The idea was not too novel or unexpected to them. But the main trouble was how to put it into practice. So I approached the Lay-Brother in charge of the workers at La Providence, our Jesuit villa, and asked him whether he could do something to help our scheme. He came forward with a very useful suggestion. He undertook to obtain the provisions from Madurai himself. Thus on the 1st of November, 1959, our Consumer-

Stores started working. A President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and 2 Counsellors were elected to form the Committee of Directors. The Secretary had to keep regular accounts of the proceedings while the treasurer had to hand over the money for the purchase of the provisions to the Brother, and the latter had to keep an exact account of what he bought.

The first day's sales went off well. It brought in about Rs. 15 as profits. But the sales came up to only Rs. 150 instead of Rs. 200 as had been previously reckoned. The reason was that many of the members had debts to repay to the shop-keepers and stood in lively fear of what reprisals might take place in case they did not purchase their stores from the shops. To overcome this difficulty a credit-wing to our society was added. Any member could borrow Rs. 10 at a time, but had to return Re. 1 a week without default. He could borrow a second time only after the first amount had been fully repaid. The scheme worked well. The total amount which could be lent to a member per week was fixed at Rs. 20. On April 1,

1960 the accounts revealed that the total amount borrowed by the members was Rs. 360. The amount that had been repaid was Rs. 314, with a balance of but Rs. 46 to be returned. More than 75 per cent of the members had fully cleared their debts at the shops.

Meanwhile we began correspondence with the Co-operative Department and an Inspector was sent to enroll the members on a form which took note of both their assets and liabilities. According to the regulations, each member was to buy a share costing Rs. 25 plus a registration fee of Rs. 2-50 np. The amount was raised and Rs. 550 was deposited on Suspension Account with the Urban Bank, Kodaikanal, with the hope of getting a loan of Rs. 5000 within a period of 2 months.

A programme had been evolved by this time to get the members to cultivate the Government land already occupied the previous year by them. Their usual employer consented to permit a half-holiday on Thursday to those who wished to work in their fields. Encouraged by a corps of local social workers who

contributed voluntary labour on Thursday mornings, the members went regularly to work in their fields by turns, i.e., all the twenty working in a single plot one Thursday, and the next working together in the second plot. By April, 1960 they had thus completed two full rounds on all the plots. The fields were ready for sowing.

During the last five months the Consumer Co-operative had transactions of about Rs. 3750, turning out a profit of Rs. 370. Ten per cent of the profits were at once entered on the respective accounts of the members. The balance was paid into the common fund.

In January the election of the new officers took place. It was conducted on purely democratic lines, and was keenly contested. The most able and capable were elected as office-bearers.

From the above description, one might gather the impression that the formation and running of the co-operative was all smooth sailing. This is not true. First of all, the co-operative was confronted with the problem of finding

money to buy provisions from Madurai. But the La Providence workers came to our rescue since they were able to help us with a loan out of their savings fund. Once the business of purchasing provisions became a regular event, merchants from Madurai began to advance their wares on credit and thus the earnings of the Consumer Stores could be utilised to satisfy the more urgent needs of the members.

Next came the difficulties from the workers themselves. These were more due to ignorance than bad will. Quarrels would arise when least expected and over trivial matters. When the parties were excited, the blame was thrown invariably on the co-operative as the root and branch of all their troubles, and there would be loud cries to close down the co-operative. But as tempers calmed, a compromise would result and peace and co-operative effort re-established.

Dishonesty on the part of the office-bearers is usually one of the serious drawbacks in any scheme of co-operation. But a series of checks and counter-checks had been

set up to prevent any kind of cheating. Further a monthly automatic rotation of salesmen proved an effective barrier to deception by giving the members an insight into the processes of purchasing and selling and book keeping.

The one serious drawback the Co-operative has received so far was from the Co-operative Department itself. When we first wrote to the department for registration, in October, 1959, we were promised a visit from the Deputy Registrar, Dindigul within a fortnight. During the interview he advised us to register the Multi-purpose co-operative society and the Housing society separately, since the loans for the Housing society had to come from the Central Government, while for the Multi-purpose society they would have to come from the State Government. He further assured us that since our's was a Harijan society the registration would be done quickly and the loans made available within two months. In November, the Inspector came to enroll the names of the members. Within a week's time Rs. 550 was deposited with the Urban Bank but from that time, in

spite of repeated appeals to Dindigul and Madras, to get the matter expedited, nothing has happened. In April, begins the best season for sowing potatoes. Alas, where are the seeds for these poor people to come from? And what about the manure? Even the little money they could collect had been paid into the bank on a suspension account through the agency of the Co-operative department that was supposed to assist them. It is the same difficulty with the Housing Society. More than two months have passed since the application for registration was made, but so far there has been no answer from the department.

Before concluding this brief survey, let me say a word about our Savings scheme.

Though the scheme has just begun, some of the members have put in their small balances left over after the purchase of their weekly provisions. Of course the implementation of the scheme is far from satisfactory. However weekly savings have also been made to prepare for the Housing scheme. Gathering these small savings together, we have somehow managed to buy some potato seeds and some manure for the April sowing. This had to be done in order to save the society from collapsing in view of the slow procedure of the government administrative machinery. But we are still living in the hope of receiving the required assistance before it is too late and of making our co-operative society a flourishing concern.

STATEMENTS

THE HIERARCHY OF CEYLON AND THE SCHOOL QUESTION

The following Statement was published on the 18th January, 1961, by the Hierarchy of Ceylon in connection with the school question after the visit of His Eminence Cardinal Gracias to that country.

"Since the enactment of the Assisted Schools Act was proposed, the Catholics have urged before the Government that to have the freedom and liberty of educating their children in an environment and atmosphere which are in accordance with the principles of their religion, and which are in no way prejudicial to the well-being of the State, is a fundamental right which cannot be denied to any citizen, including the Catholic Community. The Roman Catholic Bishops from time to time by themselves, and their representatives, have made it clear to the Government that they would be most willing to accept the National System of Education, provided that the Government ensured for the Catholics that no harm

would thereby befall their religious interests.

The misgivings and fears in the minds of Catholics on this question have driven them solely as a means of preserving their Religion and the Schools which they cherish so much, to adopt certain measures, such as the occupation of school buildings. This situation has been carefully considered by the Roman Catholic Bishops of Ceylon and they have given prayerful thought to the implications of such action on the part of the Faithful. They are satisfied that their flocks have sufficiently manifested their disapproval of the new measures.

It was no doubt in the Providence of God that the Catholics should become deeply conscious of the many dangers to their Faith and should have in such numbers opposed what seemed to be a real danger. But in the few weeks that have elapsed, in spite of many disadvantages,

the Catholics have been able to create a volume of opinion in this country and abroad that their point of view was entitled to consideration by any Government which claims to be democratic.

With the visit of His Eminence, Cardinal Gracias, to this country the Bishops have been able to give the matter further consideration and prayer, and both His Eminence the Cardinal and the Bishops

now think that the time has come for the Laity to desist from any further action which may seem to prevent the Schools from functioning. It is because of the faith that His Eminence and the Bishops have decided to place in the Government that they are appealing to the Faithful to withdraw their 'occupation' in order to enable the Schools to function in a normal manner."

CARDINAL GRACIAS ON THE CEYLON SCHOOL QUESTION

In his public speech before leaving Ceylon, the Cardinal touched upon the Ceylon School question and said: "In the scheme of Christian affairs, we do not go by worldly concepts of 'victory' or 'surrender' or 'capitulation'; for what is wisdom to the world can be folly before God, and *vice versa*, what is folly before men may be wisdom before God. We believe that the Bishops would do nothing which is not in the interests of the people. The Church cannot afford to be short-sighted in its vision, nor fail to read the signs of the times, nor run the risk of "missing the bus".

The appeal that has been made in the Bishops' Statement, both to the people and to the Government, has for its basis only one motive — namely, the desire to do what is most conducive to the wider and far-reaching interests of the Church and of the State, for the Catholic community has ever been eager to promote the welfare of the country — morally, culturally, spiritually, even economically — by safeguarding and promoting the interests of religion in whatever sphere of human activity it be. We believe that it is easier to construct a city in the air, as the ancients said,

than to develop its national life without the help of religion. Vain is the builder's toil, if it be not of the Lord's keeping. In the life of any nation, religious and moral values are indispensable ; and though we are comparatively a small community, we feel that by our life of culture and Christian living, we are making a valuable contribution to the cultural and moral progress of the Nation. Give us the tools and the country will see that they will be utilized for no other purpose than to promote the interests of the State.....

Confidence begets confidence ; Trust engenders Trust. Whatever may have been the flow of events in the recent past, we are not here to hold a *post-mortem* examination. The present is ours and we look forward to a better future. We live in an imperfect world in which we see things as in a glass dimly. But we have our Christian faith to brighten our vision. To live is to change ; and to change is to be perfect. I am no prophet, and yet the indications are that the faith we have placed in the goodwill of the Government shall not go unrewarded.

If anything, through a long-term policy, we are resolved to see that our children shall not be given the benefits of an education, bereft of a religious complexion, to which we are pledged in virtue of our religious persuasions. The road may be long, and even tortuous, but we are not losing sight of the goal — known to us, and not unknown to those concerned. All that is necessary for our people to remember is : (a) that the patient man is better than the valiant ; (b) that in a spirit of faith they must be ready, cost what it may, to follow the guidance of the Bishops : (c) that they must ever hang together — in the bonds of common Christian fellowship — lest they run the risk of hanging separately !

God, it is said, sometimes writes straight in crooked lines, and the Church's policy at times is to shoot its arrows into the future, which implies that it concedes certain things temporarily, only that its ultimate gains may be of enduring value. George Seldes in "*The Vatican, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*" makes this pertinent observation : "Why the Holy See concedes

so many things outside of its principles, and with such relative facility, is.....easily explainable. It counts on the future to restore anything it may abandon. Should we be scandalised if the Papacy, for superior aims and for longer existence, shoots its arrows into the future? Has it not the right to draw upon the centuries, after having prodigiously enriched the opening deposit which a mysterious hand had made to its account at the beginning?" Obviously, we are called to face a situation different from the past. Sometimes our Lord appears to be asleep if only that we may be vigilant. And patient vigilance is the price of eternal liberty. Religion, as the saying goes, has to be *caught*, when at times it cannot be *taught* in adequate measure. Fortunately in Ceylon there is a strong parish life; and if perhaps in some places it is not sufficiently intense, this is the occasion to speed up. It is a sphere in which we have perfect freedom and the widest latitude. It is in that setting that whatever the deficiencies of religious education be, resulting from the present system, these will have to be made good. We have to cut

our coat according to the cloth we have.

As has been pointed out so concretely in the Statement, the sacrifices made, and the principles enunciated and consistently held, have certainly not been in vain. Nothing is dead to God; everything lives to Him; for all events are chronicled in the Book of Life to bear fruit sooner or later. We hope and pray that it may be sooner than later.

But even more than schools, it is the family that is the best cradle of sound education and a healthy civilisation. There is hardly any sphere of our social life which today is so seriously threatened from every quarter as the family. The great social problems are indeed family problems: housing, wages, public morality, education. "Without a healthy and vigorous family life a people and a nation is doomed," said Pius XII, "for the family is the fundamental arch on which is raised the structure of human society." Therefore he who renews the family, renews the Nation. The State is what families make it to be. Therefore all concerned — indi-

viduals, public bodies, especially the State and the Church must endeavour to save the family — by improving economic and social conditions; by fostering the proper education outlook. A

good home must be, in the expression of a popular writer, a sanctuary of peace, of holiness, of kindness, of perfect agreement, a peaceful resting-place.

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

SOCIAL TEACHING OF POPE JOHN XXIII (*)

If one were to examine the discourses, the messages, and the encyclicals of Pope John XXIII, one would be struck by his sympathetic sensitivity to those in suffering. The poor, the infirm, the little ones, the emigrants, the prisoners, the oppressed, the suffering members of the Church of Silence, — for all these the Pope reveals an extraordinary attachment. But his heart goes out especially to the workers of the world. For them the Pope has truly a maternal benevolence. In his Christmas messages to the world he has often emphasised that human dignity of the

worker has to be respected, that man is not meant for the state, but that the goods of this world, the entire economy, and the State are meant for man.

The Christian Concept of Work

In his encyclical "Ad Petri Cathedram" and in his radio message on the 1st May, 1960, the Pope declared that according to the social teachings of the Church, human labour has not the purely economic and community value accorded to it in the Marxian system. For the Christian human work "is a high mission: by working, men become the in-

(*) Summary of an article by A. Brucculeri in "Aggiornamenti Sociali", June, 1960.

telligent and effective collaborators with God the Creator in making the earth bear fruit and prospering. Insofar as work is hard and painful, it enters into the scheme of God the Redeemer, Who having redeemed the world through the love and the sufferings of His Only Begotten Son, makes of human suffering a precious instrument of sanctification, when united to those of Christ."

Class and the Social Teaching of the Church

The same encyclical "Ad Petri Cathedram" lays down the Church's acceptance of the diversity of classes as a natural outcome of human inequality, but also upholds the belief in the possibility of their agreement and cooperation. "Those who dare deny this difference in the social classes," proclaims Pope John XXIII, "are opposing the law of nature itself." On the contrary, "those who would oppose the friendly and essential working cooperation between various classes of citizens, are trying beyond all doubt to disturb and disrupt human society, with the greatest damage and danger to private and public advantage."

We read in the same document: "The kind of harmonious unity which is sought among people and nations it is necessary to promote more and more among classes of citizens. Unless this is achieved, mutual hatred and rivalries, as We have seen, can exist: this will result in disorderly assemblies, rioting, and sometimes, even murders, together with the daily diminishing and endangering of public and private sources."

In the mind of the Church the class conflict is not an absolute necessity, which engenders social evolution and progress as the Marxist theory of dialectical Materialism would have it. The Church accepts the activity of the class as a means for the defence and triumph of justice: "Individual citizens, indeed, and various classes of citizens can justly protect their own rights, provided this is done by legal means, not by violence, and provided they do not unjustly trespass on the rights of others, which must likewise be held inviolable."

Positive and negative aspects in the social evolution

In the social evolution of our times, the positive as-

pects of inter-class relationship have been realised : "On this point it must be confessed," — says John XXIII — "and it gives hope of better things for the future, that within recent times in some places the inter-relationships and discussions are less bitter and less difficult.... In fact, the distinctive marks of the social classes have become less noticeable. The classes themselves have become numerous since there is no longer question merely of employers and employed, and they more readily include all citizens : to those who have special training and skill, the opportunity is given to rise also to higher ranks of civil society. In what particularly concerns the wage earner, it is consoling to observe that all the steps recently taken which render more human the conditions which are enjoyed by factory workers have not merely an economic value, but one higher and more in keeping with human life."

The bright vision of the social evolution is, of course, not the fruit of a naive optimism, but it is justified by facts. The great movement which goes under the name of "Human Relations", is one

way towards the realization of the doctrine of the Church. This system, if well understood, seeks to restore the bonds between Capital and Labour, basing everything on the fundamental dimension of the human personality. In the past, unfortunately the denial of such values originated slavery in the ancient world and the bondsman in the middle age, while our industrial age invented the system of wages with which labour is bought in the same way as other goods. Today by adopting the human relations system, and by fostering mutual respect, reciprocal understanding, trust and spirit of collaboration, it is sought to transform the relationship between management and labour into a brotherly community of work.

The survey of the Pope, however, besides the positive aspects touches also on the negative points : "There still remains a long-way to go, because there continue to exist too many inequalities, too many causes of enmity between various groups on account of the false or unjust conception of the rights of private property which inspires the tenacious resistance

of egoism and individualism to assert itself. Add to this the dread spectre of unemployment which oppresses many with grave anxiety and which is aggravated by the rapid progress of modern techniques in the field of production."

It is at this point of the encyclical that the Roman Pontiff indicates the weakness of the present social situation. The main root of the trouble lies in the fact that the essential character of property, which is not only an individual but also a social right, is not recognised: "The right to own private property," says Pius XI in his Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, "has been given to man by nature, or rather by the Creator Himself, both in order that individuals may be able to provide for their own needs and those of their families and also that by means of it the goods which the Creator has destined for the whole human race may truly serve this purpose. Now these ends cannot be secured unless some definite and stable order is maintained."

The Church has always fought against the exclusively

individualistic conception of property peculiar to Roman Law. She recognises the right of private property and the right to transmit by inheritance the goods a man has as his own. This right cannot be destroyed by the State, though the latter can regulate its exercise for the common good.

Suggestions for some correction in the Wage System

Under the system in which he is purely and simply a wage earner the workman finds himself a stranger in the firm in which his productive activity is passed over and the important ties of solidarity existing between Capital and Labour are ignored. It is necessary, therefore, to introduce corrections in such a system. Men, being unequal in the economic sphere and unable to be self-sufficient by themselves, meet together and exchange their services. This reciprocal trade is carried out through the exchange of labour. Therefore, labour is in itself jointly bound up with Capital. The pure wage earning function of the worker on the other hand, though not in itself an illegitimate contract, has been reduced to a selfish game in

which the capitalists on one side and the workmen on the other, each pulls his own way with the result that conflicts rise among them, which lead to unjust strikes, and dismissal from employment. Consequently the action of the employers' associations and the trade unions instead of being a bridge of unity becomes an instrument of struggle and aggression between the employer and the employee. Therefore the wage contract must be tempered by the contract of partnership as desired by Pope Pius XI and Pope Pius XII.

Let us act

Against the complaint that the social teaching of the Church has not yet been put into practice, the Pope says: "We are aware that not a few of Our Children, because they are poor or nearly destitute, often make it a ground of complaint that the Christian social teaching has not yet been put into practice. Work in this field, then, must be done, with zeal and enterprise, not only by private citizens, but particularly by those who hold public office in the State, so that Christian social doctrine which Our Predecessors on several occasions clearly

and wisely proposed and proclaimed, and We Ourselves ratify, may as soon as possible, — though by graded stages, — be made really and thoroughly effective."

Again the accusation the Marxists have levelled at the Church, that She preaches but does not put Her sermons into practice, Pope John XXIII, in a speech delivered when he was still a Cardinal, replied: "After half a century of experience with various systems we realise how hopeless it is to formulate a scheme of social justice without the Gospel of Christ."

Socialist propaganda has, it is true, supported the rights of the workmen, but at the same time, it has opened the road to an execrable slavery such as that of the communist system.

The fact that the Church with Her doctrine and action has been unable to realise Her programme does not mean that She has been passive, but that evil forces have prevented Her from doing so. "The Church" — says Pius XII — "has been and is conscious of Her responsibility.

Without the Church the social question is insoluble ; on the other hand She is unable to solve it alone. Collaboration is needed by the intellectual, economic, and technical resources of the public authorities."

It is precisely these public authorities, who for a long time, under the pretext of the Church's interference in such questions, have hindered Her action : "If only the Church, divinely appointed Mistress of justice and love, were given everywhere that freedom of action which is Her undoubted and inalienable right, what rich blessings would everywhere flow from it, what hope, what peace would dawn on the nations, what valuable, what indispensable services would be devoted to the cause of human progress ! If the plans which men devise for the consolidation of a lasting peace between nations and between classes within the nations, were only reinforced by those evangelical counsels, which preach Christian love in contrast to the restless self-seeking which is the curse of public and private life, how many tragedies might be avoided, what security might be restored to mankind -"

Another reason why the Church has appeared inactive in the social field is the dulled social sensibility, the blind and turbulent conservatism, which even now, continues to prevail among isolated individuals and groups, who are far from understanding the importance and the necessity of the social problem. Unfortunately, among the well-to-do, the absolute rulers in the industrial, agricultural, commercial and financial fields, in one word, among those who dominate economic life, there are some who do not tolerate a social policy, that strives to abolish the proletariat ; and so they hurl anathemas at those democratic States, which, they say, have become tyrannical and impose heavy and unjust taxation under the pretext of uplifting the continually increasing masses by aid and insurance.

We admit that the movements which fight for the revaluation of work are liable to make mistakes, but these mistakes, ought to be corrected and they should not be the occasion for general condemnations and for the approval of the unjust reactions of interested classes. "The Christian formula" — we say with

Cardinal Montini — “sees the evil where it is.... but with the intention of helping it, curing it, and giving a chance for new and creative energies to emerge.”

Justice and Charity

The encyclical “Ad Petri Cathedram” has synthetised the social teaching of the Church on the classes and has stressed the fundamental principle that regulates their interrelations: “Those citizens who are less well endowed with the world’s goods, and complain of their too difficult standard of life, should also know, first, that We feel no less grief at their lot; and this not only because We have a father’s desire that in social matters, justice, which is a Christian virtue, should rightly control and rule and share the respective relations of the classes of citizens, but in particular, because We feel the deepest grief that the enemies of the Church easily abuse the unjust conditions of the proletariat so as to lure them to their own side by false promises and specious errors.”

Face to face with the social problem the Church does not approve of the facile proposals of those who seek to

solve it through the benevolence of the employer and the patience of the employed. She does not tolerate a paternalism, that tries to cover a violation of justice with the veil of pseudo-charity. Charity cannot take the place of justice, which has to be given under obligation, and which is iniquitously denied. It is just because of the emphasis on justice which permeates the Encyclical “Rerum Novarum” that this great document roused everywhere the most profound admiration. “Already from the beginning” — comments the famous Goyau — “Leo XIII points out with vehement words the incalculable evils the poor have to suffer. He does not show them as incurable miseries... but reveals them as injustices, which must be done away with. This Encyclical is not an invitation to give alms, but it establishes the foundation of a right on Christian principles.”

Justice, however, must be placed side by side with charity in order to give consistency and stability to the order of the classes. Justice, in fact, will be able to eliminate the causes of social conflicts, but it will be incapable

of uniting the wills of men. It is only in union with charity that men will feel they are members of a great family and Children of the same Father, Who is in heaven, and that they are one Body in Christ.

A famous politician, Clemenceau, said that if only one drop of the blood of St. Francis of Assisi, would flow in the veins of all Christians,

the world would be soon transformed.

This drop of blood, ultimately, is nothing else than the charity, which sprang from the wounded side of the Son of Man. Only through this charity will classes, nations and the whole of mankind become an oasis of lasting peace.

C. Conte

An All-India Labour Seminar will be held in Hyderabad on March, 11, 12, and 13. It has been organised by the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

NEWS AND COMMENT

Communists Experimenting in China

It is generally admitted that the sharpest brains in the Communist camp are to be found among the Chinese Communists and the Chinese as a race are a very intelligent and shrewd people. It is therefore interesting to note how Marxian dogma can inspire the Chinese leaders to make a series of the most muddled headed experiments in their attempt to prove that their basic Marxist principles are correct and their Marxian dogmas valid. In the year 1958, more than a million small steel furnaces had been established in the rural areas in order to increase the production of steel as rapidly as possible. Millions of peasants were recruited to set up the furnaces, to fire the kilns, to feed them with coal, coke and iron ore, and to maintain them in continuous production. But in March, 1959 at the national meeting of the delegates of these small steel furnaces, it was decided to abandon such furnaces and

keep only those that produced pig iron. The reasons were that the use of manual labour to break up iron ore was too expensive, for cheap crushing machines could easily be used, that there was a lack of repair in the plants, the buildings were inadequate, and transport facilities poor. Moreover it was realised that the inexperience and ignorance of millions of peasants suddenly transformed into steel workers was an important factor in the failure of the scheme. The quality of the material produced by the small furnaces had deteriorated considerably, sometimes because of the use of poor coal which gives too high a percentage of sulphur in pig-iron, thus rendering it unusable. The unpredictable rainy season that turns the whole countryside into a quagmire for weeks at a time prevented transportation of the required material to the furnaces, brought about a flooding of the open pits, and ruined some of the stored material.

The result of the experiment has been the return to the pre-1958 position so as to provide the really good furnaces with the best coal and the high grade ores, for there is great need of good quality steel. Arrangements have therefore been made to direct the materials to the places where they can be most suitably utilised for the production of high grade steel. Transport has been the main bottleneck and a reorganisation of transport facilities is being undertaken.

The year 1959 has been a year of readjustment. A serious effort to adapt the iron and steel industry to the realities of the country was made. About a thousand groups of small furnaces, mostly built in 1958, were as far as possible in places accessible to ore and coal so as to minimise the burden on transport. Technical improvements were developed by the more experienced workers. The small furnace has helped to spread the iron and steel industry in several new areas of the country.

Compared with the years 1957 to 1959, the year 1960 has been for China rather a dull

year. In 1957, there was the revival of free speech — 'let a hundred flowers bloom' — followed by the sudden change from free speech to terror. In 1958, millions were sent from the cities to primitive villages, and the communes were started. In 1959, there were discreet but clear signs of relaxation, when economists said openly what they thought of the Great Leap forward and the communes, and the fierce reaction at the August party meeting to such rightist opportunist enemies. 1960 was marked as a year of discipline dedicated to the "Thoughts" of Mao and to agriculture. There was an incredible amount of adulation, of calls for the study of the Thoughts, of praise in novels, plays, songs and speeches for their author, endless repetitions of the same hymn. Yet there were complaints of the non-cooperation of the youth, many of whom, especially among the educated, were only pretending to be convinced. The President of the Peking University was removed from his post for his vitriolic attack on the policies of the party and the government.

In 1960, the Party still maintained its direct rule,

pushing aside the Government organisations. There was a struggle for the upkeep of discipline even inside the Party ranks. At the end of the year a new campaign of words began, exhorting the Party members to obey Party orders. Criticism and dissatisfaction with the regime was strictly repressed. Since 1959 the ban on newspapers leaving the country is still in force, but the truth still leaks out through newspaper smuggling in Honkong.

In foreign relations, the event of the year has been the friction between the Kremlin and Peking, a painful episode in the modern history of world communism. The inner story of the month-long conference of 81 communist parties in Moscow has not been made public. Although the published statement of the conference stresses the unity of delegates and their respective countries, the authoritative Red Flag carried an editorial which showed Peking still unrepentant.

The causes of friction seem to be the claim of the USSR to head the Communist camp. The Chinese admit that while the Soviet Union is

carrying out the full-scale construction of a communist society, other countries of the socialist camp are successfully laying the foundations of socialism, and some of them (obviously Peking) have already entered the period of construction of a developed socialist society. For Mao, the Chinese have already laid the foundations of socialist society. They only need to perfect it and the communes were the first step towards complete communism. But the Moscow Statement claims that the USSR is the only country on the way towards Communism, the other communist countries are still miles behind. Russia has a privileged position in the march of history ; she is the leader.

This way of speaking is not palatable to China. The economic situation in China however does not allow the Chinese Communists to be too bold in their claims, for targets have not been fulfilled. Instead, hunger and poverty stalk the land. There is great scarcity of food-grains, textiles, sugar and edible oil. The blame for all this is attributed to the vagaries of unkind Nature, as if the communes had done no damage.

Today the communes enjoy a nominal existence, thus re-establishing the former system. The labour brigades are now considered to be the backbone of agricultural organisation. The communal kitchens are still maintained to feed the millions.

At the same time, the foreign policy of the Chinese communists has not changed. They do not believe in peaceful co-existence; they have practically wiped out the Tibetan nation, and are still in possession of nearly 40,000 square miles of India's northern border territory. Nepal and Bhutan are already feeling the Chinese expansionist pressure. Burma has succumbed to Chinese influence at the expense of her friendship with India. And the Communist party in India can boldly assert that our differences with China are merely a 'minor controversy' in the words of Mr. B. T. Ranadive. There is very little in the modern world to compare with the fierce fanaticism of the Communists especially of the Chinese brand. 1961 will certainly witness a further evolution in their ideology and their tactics, the more so since the new American President has out-

lined a much more constructive policy for the free nations to implement.

Unemployment

It is always very difficult to obtain statistics of unemployment in India. As nearly 70 per cent of our people are engaged in agriculture, there is a large amount of disguised unemployment since on the land there is always some work for everyone to do, for the same amount of work tends to divide itself among a larger number of workers. But in the urban centres, Employment Exchanges furnish the main data on the increase or decrease of unemployment. However even these figures are deceptive, for they provide a very rough guide to the extent of unemployment. Many workers do not know of the existence of the employment exchanges, and the employers do not make use of them as they should. They mirror only a percentage of the total unemployed in urban areas.

In the first five year plan, although there is a chapter on employment, no figures are given of the numbers unemployed. It was noticed that after the stoppage of the Korean war, there was an in-

crease in unemployment especially in urban areas as this was dully reflected in the sudden spurt in applications for employment at the employment exchanges from 3.37 lakhs in March, 1951 to 5.22 lakhs in December, 1953 and further to 6.92 lakhs in December 1955.

The second five year plan discussed the problem of employment in more explicit terms. First, there were the existing unemployed in the urban and rural centres. Secondly, there was the increase in the existing labour force of about two million a year to be considered, and thirdly, there were the unemployed in rural occupations and those engaged in household occupations in urban areas.

The employment surveys which were undertaken during the first plan period revealed that in urban areas about 8 to 10 per cent of the employable population or roughly 2.5 million persons were unemployed. To this was to be added the figure of 3.8 millions during the five years

of the second plan, viz., the new entrants to the urban labour force. In the rural areas some 2.8 million persons were found to be unemployed, mainly from the ranks of agricultural workers, as discovered by the Agricultural Labour Enquiry. Since it was assumed by the planners that the total number of new entrants to the labour force was to be 10 millions during the five years of the second plan, it is obvious that the new entrants to the rural labour force would be 6.2 millions.

Thus the total number of unemployed during the second five year plan was expected to be 2.5 million urban unemployed plus 3.8 million rural unemployed, plus the 10 million new entrants to the labour force during the period of the second plan, totalling in all some 15.3 millions. The objective of the second plan was to provide sufficient job opportunities for the 10 million new entrants into the labour force. But according to the draft of the third plan achievement is likely to have fallen short of this target.

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